

# House Armed Services Committee

## DEMOCRATS

Ike Skelton, Ranking Member

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### **Equipment Levels Fall Short; Known Costs Still not Budgeted**

***WASHINGTON D.C.—Today House Armed Services Democrats questioned the military service chiefs regarding significant shortfalls in equipment levels, as well as the failure to budget for known future costs of war.***

Ranking Member, Ike Skelton (MO) made the following statement:

“The needs of our service men and women are not being met. We have units preparing to deploy into combat without the weapons and equipment they will need. For example I know of one active duty Army brigade currently training to deploy that lacks 542 of the rifles needed to meet its troop requirements.

Military equipment is designed for a certain service-life. The sustained level of combat in Iraq is wearing out our equipment much sooner than planned and has led to documented shortages. We must take steps to ensure that our equipment levels match the policy requirements of our troops in theater.

If the conflict ended today, and all our troops pulled out of Iraq, it would still take a minimum of 2 more years of funding to reset our force to pre-Iraq readiness levels.

We heard testimony today that the Army alone is spending \$4.7 billion each month on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. At what point do we start including what we already know will be future costs in the routine budget process?

The next time the service chiefs testify before our committee will be in the spring after we have received their fiscal year 2006 budget requests. We hope their budgets will properly reflect the needs created by the ongoing conflict in Iraq.”

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